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LETTER DATED 30 NOVEMBER 1995 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF RWANDA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey to you the final draft of the Declaration on the Great Lakes Region made by the Heads of State of Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire and former President Jimmy Carter as facilitator on 29 November 1995 at Cairo.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Manzi BAKURAMUTSA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Rwanda
to the United Nations

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Annex

Cairo Declaration on the Great Lakes Region

29 November 1995

Deeply concerned about the persistent tensions, hostilities, insecurities and recent genocide in the Great Lakes region, and their adverse effects on democratic and economic development, the Presidents of Zaire, Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda and a special Presidential envoy from the United Republic of Tanzania met in Cairo on 28 and 29 November 1995. The meeting was co-convened by Presidents Mobutu and Museveni and former President Mwinyi, with the support of Presidents Ntibantunganya and Bizimungu. Former President Carter of the United States of America and Archbishop Tutu of South Africa served as facilitators. The Heads of State and delegations at this summit meeting, which was an African initiative, pledged to take joint concrete actions to advance peace, justice, reconciliation, stability and development in the region.

The Heads of State and delegations were convinced that the problems of Rwanda and Burundi were basically a consequence of a confluence of negative interests of colonialism and local opportunists who have fostered the ideology of exclusion that generates fear, frustration, hatred and tendencies to extermination and genocide.

The Heads of State and delegations call upon the international community to condemn vigorously the ethnic and political genocide ideology used in competition for conquest and monopoly of power.

Determined to prevent future genocide, ensure reconciliation with justice relating to the tragic genocide in Rwanda in 1994, and encourage the return of refugees to their home countries, the Heads of State and delegations affirmed their mutual confidence and decided on the following specific actions:

(a) They condemned the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, other incidents of mass killings in the past and the ideology of genocide despicably used by some forces to pursue their own selfish ends. They also condemn the other similar acts and events which have occurred in the past and are recurring in Burundi.

(b) The Heads of State and delegations of the Great Lakes region solemnly pledge that their territories will never be used to serve as bases by armed groups to launch incursions or attacks against any other country represented at this conference. They agree to cooperate by providing all information in advance on suspected persons or on anticipated incursions or armed attacks against another country.

(c) The Heads of State and delegations in whose countries refugees were currently located pledged to take action to curtail the activities of those in the camps who seek to intimidate the refugees wishing to return to their homes. President Mobutu pledged soon to remove from the refugee camps the identified intimidators. The envoy of the United Republic of Tanzania affirmed his Government's desire to isolate all criminals from the refugee camps, and will

seek cooperation from the international community in acquiring the resources necessary to achieve this objective.

(d) The Heads of State and delegations agreed to prevent military training and delivery of weapons to militia groups or any other groups among the refugees.

(e) The Heads of State and delegations viewed with deep concern the use of radio broadcasts to spread hate and fear in the region. The participants pledged to take all possible action to terminate the illegal and inflammatory radio broadcasts from one country into another. They called upon the international community to assist by providing technology to identify the location of mobile transmitters.

(f) The Heads of State and delegations urged an acceleration of the work of the International Tribunal. They solemnly and unequivocally pledged to place at the disposal of the International Tribunal for trial all those indicted by the Tribunal, and urge leaders of all other nations to do the same.

They also expressed full support for the Commission of Inquiry's investigation of the assassination of President Ndadaye and the massacres that followed.

(g) The Rwandan Head of State declared unequivocally that his Government wanted the refugees to return to Rwanda at an early date, reclaim their property, live in safety and peace, help rebuild their country's economy, and participate in its political life under a broad-based government of national unity. This government will guarantee the safety of the returning refugees. It will work in collaboration with the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, and the international community. In cooperation with Zaire, it will work out arrangements by which refugees can return home to assess the situation for themselves and then go back to the camps to apprise the other refugees of the true conditions prevailing in Rwanda. In addition, other visits to and from the camps by refugees, non-governmental organizations and others will be encouraged.

(h) The Heads of Sate and delegations perceive no major restrictions to the return of refugees to Rwanda. They believe that when the refugees are convinced of the fact that conditions are safe to return, a large number will go home. A majority will move back to their country with minimum assistance. Working closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other international agencies, the Governments involved believe that the number of returning refugees who avail themselves of UNHCR assistance should rise progressively to 10,000 a day within a short time. There are no impediments within Rwanda or Burundi to an even higher rate of return.

(i) The Heads of State and delegations commend UNHCR for its continuing efforts to assist the refugees and ameliorate their plight in the refugee camps. Its work and commitment are greatly appreciated. The participants would urge in the future that local representatives of UNHCR devote more of their attention and resources towards helping the refugees return and settle safely, even if

this requires some modification of the organization's guidelines. The Governments stand ready to work with UNHCR in this effort.

(j) The horrendous genocide of 1994 massively strained the Rwandan judicial system. It is trying to cope with the unprecedented requirements, including training of many judges and magistrates. It will seek assistance from the international community as appropriate and consistent with its principles. Fully conscious of the conditions in its overcrowded prisons, it will separate prisoners according to the severity of charges against them, move as innovatively and expeditiously as possible to try or release those not guilty of serious crimes, and temporarily augment facilities for housing prisoners.

(k) As requested and approved by the leaders of Burundi, the Heads of State and delegations will provide assistance, and call upon the international community also to assist, in the implementation of the Convention of Government, including support for the National Debate. Security of persons is a fundamental problem in Burundi. As requested and approved by the leaders of Burundi, assistance will be sought to improve the system of justice. The Heads of State and the delegations will support the efforts of the Government of Burundi to work out modalities for all the population to regain full confidence in the security forces.

(l) The Heads of State and delegations considered it imperative that the search for peace in the Great Lakes region should be accompanied by coordinated and concrete actions by the international community to mobilize financial resources so as to bring economic and social development to the region.

(m) The Heads of State and delegations agreed to seek solutions to related property and asset issues among Governments in the region.

(n) The Heads of State and delegations requested that former Presidents Nyerere of the United Republic of Tanzania, Toure of Mali, Carter of the United States, and Archbishop Tutu of South Africa analyse in depth the results of this meeting and the continuing problems of the region and prepare recommendations for consideration by the five Governments at a second meeting, early in 1996. With prior approval from the five Governments, other participants and observers will be invited.

The Heads of State and delegations were pleased by the frank and constructive discussions that characterized their Cairo Summit. They commended the Carter Center for arranging the meeting.

The Heads of State and delegations expressed their profound appreciation to President Mubarak and the Egyptian people for their support and hospitality for this historic meeting.

(Signed) Mobutu Sese SEKO

(Signed) Yoweri Kaguta MUSEVENI

(Signed) Pasteur BIZIMUNGU

(Signed) Sylvestre NTIBANTUNGANYA

(Signed) Abdulrahman KINANA

(Signed) Jimmy CARTER
(witness)